When Sweden Voted Wet

Continued from First Page.

sign his name every time he buys strong liquor. The "motbok" entitles its owner to four liters of spirits a month, although in some parts of Sweden, such as the northern provinces, where the prohibition forces are strong, the quantity is two liters. Applying for a "motbok" is like applying for a passport. Usually only one member of a family may have one of these highly prized little books, exception being made in the case of sons who have reached the discreet age of 25.

In public places, such as hotels and cafes, the amount of spirits to be sold is based on the amount of food consumed, with a certain maximum quantity permitted. Waiters become experts in knowing just how much hard liquor a diner is entitled to. On the night of the prohibition plebiscite I dined at the "Opera Kallaren," and, as is the Swedish custom, went up on the terrace for coffee after the meal. Our waiter in the main dining hall gave us a slip with the exact number of centilitres to which we were still entitled marked upon it.

There are numerous exceptions to the rules of Sweden's liquor system. One is allowed extra quantities for occasions, such as weddings and funerals.

Sales of liquor to hotels and public places are made on the basis of yearly contracts. When these places buy in excess of these contracts they must pay a higher price, a price exactly equal to that which they charge their customers. The idea is to do away as much as possible with private profits from the liquor traffic. The Wine and Spirits Central has bought out all the private wine merchants in Sweden, and the shareholders of it and the local companies which it serves are entitled to only 5 per cent. on their money. The balance of the profits go to the Government. Three main ideas run through the Bratt system: Reduction of the general ration of distilled and spirituous liquors through a central control, denial of liquor to alcoholics and persons who are known to abuse drink, and elimination of all private interest in the liquor traffic.

Most people in Sweden think that the Bratt system is a bulwark against prohibition. The vote against prohibition was regarded in many quarters as something of a personal triumph for Dr. Bratt.

Dr. Bratt's contention that the leading people in Sweden are not in favor of prohibition seems to be borne out by the fact that Djursholm, a suburb of Stockholm, whose residents are mostly well-to-do officials, men of affairs and professional men, returned the greatest majority against prohibition—87.6 per cent. On the other hand, Huskvarna, an industrial town, voted 87.1 per cent. in favor of prohibition. The Swedish Bolsheviks are prohibitionists; the conservatives are anti-prohibitionists.

"If prohibition is to succeed," Dr. Bratt told me, "it must have a strong public opinion behind it.

"I do not know what the general sentiment is in America, but I saw something the other day which impressed me very much. Two hundred American travelers who came here with a travel bureau to see Sweden were dining at the Grand Hotel. Only one out of the two hundred drank wine with his meal. The rest drank water.

"I have no opinion, really, on American prohibition. America is too far away. It is hard to study prohibition at a distance. And then your prohibition is a rather young thing, after all, to draw many conclusions from. Of course, when you can do away, at one stroke, with the saloons, as you have in America, prohibition must bring some immediate benefits. But it itself provokes forces that may be very dangerous. It means doing away with the legal trade in liquor. When you do that you take away the best competitor to illegal trade."

Statistics are heavily on the side of Dr. Bratt in his contention that his system has lessened the social harm caused by alcohol. In 1913, before the present restrictive measures went into effect, the total Swedish consumption of distilled and spirituous liquors was 38.7 millions of liters. In 1921 the total consumption was 28.4 millions of liters, a reduction of 27 per cent. But even these figures are far too modest, for in 1913 distilled liquors were sold by scores of private dealers, the figures for which are lacking. Arrests for drunkenness in Sweden have gone down 49 per cent. In 1913 there were 58,909 arrests for drunkenness in the kingdom. In 1921 there were 30,081. The Katarina Hospital in Stockholm, which is the central receiving hospital for cases of the kind, reports a reduction of 61 per cent. in chronic alcoholism. In 1913 the hospital had 584 cases; in 1921, 228.

Dr. Bratt, liquor controller.

The defeat of prohibition on the 27th has turned Swedish prohibitionists in the direction of local option. Such prohibition leaders as Alexis Bjorkman, Gustaf Ekman and August Ljunggren, all journalists and members of the Swedish Parliament, now speak of winning the country piece by piece. They also want Dr. Bratt to reduce the amount of liquor sold under his system of control. But this he firmly refuses to do. He bases his refusal on the fact that during the years 1918 and 1919, when the restriction on the sale of spirits was very severe, because of shortage due to the war, and also because of the lack of potatoes for distilling, drunkenness increased alarmingly.

"I want our people to think as little about alcohol as possible," says Dr. Bratt. "The surest way to make them think a lot about it is to make it very hard to get."

The Default of Octavia Caesar

Continued from Page Three.

inspection.' he says. 'I got a kind of feelin' —'And I got a kind of feelin', too,' I says, 'only mine's in the pit o' my stummick.' 'Oh, come on, Loosh,' he says, 'you kin git your breakfast at my house on the way back.' We got to Beriah's just as he come rushin' out o' the barn door, lookin' kind o' wild. 'Has she had 'em?' I says. 'How many has she had? says Erm. 'Don't talk to me; don't talk to me,' Beriah yells.

Nurses New Family.

"Well, sirs, we went in the barn and found that sow nursin' her new fambly, and truth to tell they was pretty poor spindlin' specimens compared to the kind she usually had. There was ten of 'em in all, and ——"

"Ten?" said Tunk Whalley.

"Just as I'd finished countin'," said the man from Longeddy, "Beriah came rushin' in ag'in. 'Turn her over, turn her over!' he yells. 'She's smotherin' the other ten underneath her.' But there wasn't any underneath her that I could find. 'You red reprobate,' Beriah yells, 'what do you mean by it? How much is ten and ten?' Octavia opened her jaws tired like and the pebbles rolled out. There was ten of 'em. 'Millet, millet, who's got the millet?' says Erm Finch. 'Well, Loosh,' he says, 'you can pay me over them one hundred millet seeds on the way home.'"

"What become of the other ten pebbles?" said Lafe Upshow.

"There was a difference of opinion about that, o' course," said the man from Longeddy, "for they wasn't ever found, and everybody felt free to make a guess.

"Beriah told me later that the last he saw of 'em was the night previous, just after Erm and me left. Said he'd given Octavia a last count 'fore he locked up the barn, and the pebbles was all there then. 'But, Beriah says, 'you must hev had a fierce toothache, the way that barn smells o' camphor after you and Finch had gone,' he says.

"What did you think yourself?" said Lafe.

"Well," said the man from Longeddy," I knew I didn't have no toothache, and I allays thought it was kind o' significant what happened that mornin' when I stopped by Erm's for breakfast. One of the children was at the side porch throwin' stones, or what looked like stones. White they was an' with a strong smell o' camfire. 'That child has wasted nigh that whole box o' mothballs you got last week,' says Mis' Finch as we went in. 'Oh,' says Erm, easy like, 'I guess it's all right. Matter o' fact,' he says, 'I finished with 'em.' Waste, I call it,' says Mis' Finch. Oh, I wouldn't exactly say that,' says Ermentrout. 'Matter o' fact,' he says, 'the ten I used saved me something like a hundred dollars—I mean millet seeds,' he says."

The Peacemakers

ON THE TRAIL OF THE PEACEMAKERS. By Fred B. Smith. The Macmillan Company.

THIS book is in essence a violent indictment of war. It repeats the familiar but none the less vital suggestion that civilization is on the brink of ruin; that we are in danger of another upheaval even more disastrous than the recent conflict; that in a widereaching war there are no victors, since both sides must lose heavily in the only resources that count. "War kills us off at the top," declares the author. "It is like cutting off all the buds from the fruit trees and the gardens in the springtime."

On the basis of years of experience in the Orient and in Europe the author reaches the conclusion that war is not only diabolical, but unnecessary; that the sentiment of the world is overwhelmingly against it, and that it is gradually coming to be recognized that there are no good byproducts of war; that the halo is beginning to be wiped from the fiction of martial glory and that there is need for a worldwide campaign of education to tear it away completely; that in spite of all efforts "the present methods being applied to settle the issues of the last war are rapidly adjusting the stage scenery for another slaughter of the innocent," and that, moreover, "there never will be continuous peace till some form of open diplomacy is discovered and adopted."

While the author writes with sincerity and with considerable insight in his descriptions of the evils of war, yet the book has one common but serious drawback: it presents no adequate remedy. Mr. Smith himself is inclined to find the solution along religious lines, but he fails to convince the reader of the efficacy of the methods he outlines, and accordingly leaves himself somewhat in the position of a physician who diagnoses correctly a malignant disease but can prescribe no remedy.

Book Exchange